

REMARKS

In an Office Action mailed January 29, 2010, claims 1, 2, 7, 18, 25, and 26 were rejected. Herein, claim 1 has been amended. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added. Additionally, claims 6, 11, 16, 25, and 26 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject therein. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the following remarks.

Initially, Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 14, 15, and 21-24 are allowed, and determining that claims 6 and 11 contain allowable subject matter. In this regard, Applicants note that claim 1 has been amended so as to include the allowable subject matter of claim 6 and the subject matter of intervening claim 25. Applicants believe the amendments to the claims place the application in condition for allowance.

I. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(b)

Claims 1, 7, and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Gregory (US 2,875,599). As noted above, claim 1 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of cancelled claim 6. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1 is patentable over Gregory.

Further, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 7 is patentable over Gregory based at least on its dependency from amended claim 1.

Claims 1, 2, 7, 18, 25, and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Jacob (US 2002/0115492). As noted above, claim 1 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of cancelled claim 6. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1 is patentable over Jacob.

Further, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2, 7, and 18 are patentable over Jacob based at least on their dependency from amended claim 1.

II. Conclusion

Therefore, for at least the reasons presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1, 21, and 22, as well as the claims depending therefrom, are clearly allowable over the prior art of record.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is clearly in condition for allowance. An early notice thereof is earnestly solicited.

If, after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner feels there are any issues remaining which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the undersigned by telephone in order to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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